

The Climax of all the Prophecies in Daniel

Daniel 12:1-13

Daniel 12:1-13 - *“At that time Michael shall stand up,*

The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people;

And there shall be a time of trouble,

Such as never was since there was a nation,

Even to that time.

And at that time your people shall be delivered,

Every one who is found written in the book.

² *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,*

Some to everlasting life,

Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

³ *Those who are wise shall shine*

Like the brightness of the firmament,

And those who turn many to righteousness

Like the stars forever and ever.

⁴ *“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”*

⁵ *Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. ⁶ And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?”*

⁷ *Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.*

⁸ *Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?”*

⁹ *And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.*

¹¹ *“And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹² Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.*

¹³ *“But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”*

Background Notes

Daniel 12 concludes the fourth prophetic vision of Daniel, which began in chapter 10 and completes the book of Daniel. Verse 1 says that *“at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.”* Obviously it is the Jewish people who are being described here as “Your people.” Michael is the archangel who is the special guardian of Israel.

But when is “that time” mentioned here in verse 1? When is the time when the great archangel, Michael, arises on behalf of the Jewish people? In the context, following on from chapter 11, it is the same time as the last half of Daniel 11. We see in verse 1 of Daniel 12 that it is a time of great distress on this earth, especially for the Jewish people: *“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.”*

We believe “that time” refers to the future Tribulation period, the time period we were dealing with in the last half of Daniel 11. This is the time that the Lord spoke of in His Olivet discourse about the future. In Matthew 24:21 the Lord Jesus said: *“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.”*

From Revelation 12 we learn that at that time there will be angelic warfare in the heavens, and Michael, with the holy angels, will defeat Satan and the unholy angels. Satan and his evil angels will be cast down to this earth. Knowing that he has only a short time, Satan will make war against the Jewish people. This will occur during the second half of the seven year Tribulation period; thus this period is known as the “Great Tribulation.” At this time the abomination of desolation will be set up in the Temple area, according to what our Lord predicted in Matthew 24:15-16.

Doctrinal Points

1. The resurrection in Daniel 12 does not include the “Rapture of the Church.”

In 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4 we read of a resurrection of Christians. In this resurrection the bodies of Christians who have died and the bodies of Christians who are alive will be caught up from the earth, and will be changed and become immortal. We refer to this resurrection as the “rapture” (or “catching up”) of all true believers, the Church.

Is Daniel 12 referring to this resurrection? Answer: No! We don’t believe so for several reasons:

1. We believe that when you put all the prophetic passages of the Bible together systematically, the “rapture” of the church will occur before the Tribulation period (which is the time period of Daniel 12:1 and 2, as we’ve seen).
2. It is Daniel’s people, that is the Jewish people who are written in God’s book, that are in view here in Daniel 12:1: *“And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book.”*
3. We see that unbelievers are involved in the resurrection described in Daniel 12:2, whereas only believers are involved in the resurrection at the time of the “rapture.”

So we believe that the resurrection in Daniel 12 is the same as the resurrection of Revelation 20, which involves the martyrs of the Tribulation period, and would include the martyrs of the godly remnant of Jewish believers at that time. They will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation period to enter and reign with Christ in His millennial kingdom along with the rest of believers (Revelation 20:4).

Revelation 20 goes on to reveal that the resurrection of the damned, which will include those here in Daniel 12:2 who come to life for “*shame and everlasting contempt*,” comes at the end of the thousand year earthly reign of Christ. So there is a time span of 1000 years in Daniel 2, between the resurrections of believers and unbelievers.

In verse 3 we see that the believers who are resurrected at the end of the Tribulation period will enter into the millennial kingdom of Christ with the reward of glory that will extend into eternity.

So all believers will be part of Christ’s 1000-year kingdom on this earth, but believers will not all be resurrected at the same time. The resurrection in Daniel 12 does not include the rapture of the Church.

2. The numbered days in Daniel 12 do include the Return of the Lord.

The river in this vision is the Tigris River (v5), as we saw in Daniel 10:4. Two more holy angels are seen on the banks of the river speaking to the man dressed in linen who was, as we’ve seen, either the Lord himself, or another holy angel. Two questions and two answers are given in the second half of Daniel 12. Question #1 is in verses 5-6. One of the angels wanted to know how long it would be until the end of these events involving Israel’s final persecution and deliverance. The answer is given in verse 7: the persecution and shattering of the Jewish people would continue for “*a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished*.” That is the three and a half years of the “Great Tribulation.” But at the end of this time the Lord will return to the earth! He will judge those who persecuted his people and establish His worldwide kingdom.

In verse 8 we have Question #2. Daniel himself asked this question because he, like us, was having a difficult time understanding the vision. Daniel asked how all these events would work out in the end. The answer is given in verses 10-13. In verse 10 Daniel was told what we learned back in Daniel 11:35 “*And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.*”

Throughout past history, and at the present time, and during the Tribulation period of the future, God has been and will be purging and purifying and refining a godly Jewish remnant. The wicked will continue in their wicked ways, and they will not have a clue as to what God has been doing throughout history with the Jewish people. Believers who study Scripture, however, will understand more and more about God’s plans and purposes for the Jewish people as time unfolds.

Now what about these numbers in verses 11-12? Revelation 11:2 and Revelation 13:5 speak of this time as “forty-two months,” which is 3 1/2 years – the second half of the Tribulation period, or the Great Tribulation. And Revelation 12:6 gives the time period as 1260 days, which is also 3 1/2 years, based on the Hebrew lunar year of 360 days.

But why are 1290 days and 1335 days given here in Daniel 12:11-12? Why are additional days given there? This is either because the abomination of desolation will be set up in the Temple area before the beginning of the final 3 ½ years of the Tribulation period, or the extra days will occur after the Tribulation period is over. The Lord will have returned, but the judgments that we read of at the end of the Tribulation period may not yet be complete. The cleansing of the Temple and the judgment of the nations will need to take place (Matthew 25). The additional 45 days, giving a total of 1335 days, will probably be needed for all the details involved in setting up the kingdom. In any event, the numbered days in Daniel 12 do include the return of the Lord!

Practical Application

It will be great to be an “end time Monday Morning quarterback!”

Do you know what a “Monday morning quarterback” is? It’s a lot easier to analyze a Sunday afternoon football game after it is over than before the game begins or while it’s being played. Agreed?

In a similar way, when all of these events of the end times begin to take place, it will be a lot easier to see God’s overall “game plan.” That’s really the point of verses 4 and 9 here! **In context**, the phrase “going here and there and increasing knowledge” (v4) is **not** referring to world travel and computer capability of the end times! No – that phrase is referring to understanding these prophecies!

Daniel was to conceal and seal up the book. In other words, he was to carefully preserve this important revelation. And in the end time, as believers thoroughly search out and study these prophecies, knowledge of how God’s prophetic programs are being worked out will become much more clear. That will certainly be true in reference to the details about which we can’t be dogmatic now!

Right now the “end game” is only beginning. When we look back from our place in the kingdom it will be great to see God’s plans unfold and be an “end time Monday Morning quarterback!”